

April 1996

## Angie LeClercq, Director, Daniel Library, The Citadel

Katins Strauch

*Against the Grain*

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### Recommended Citation

Strauch, Katins (1996) "Angie LeClercq, Director, Daniel Library, The Citadel," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 8: Iss. 2, Article 16.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.2022>

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# Interview with Angie LeClerc

Director, Daniel Library — The Citadel, Charleston, S.C.

by Katina Strauch (Editor, *Against the Grain*)

Okay, y'all. When I learned that the Citadel had a new librarian, I thought, why not interview her for ATG? So — here is an interview with a vivacious, energetic, and full of Southern charm woman who is also a librarian, lawyer, and author. And, no, I am not going to ask her what she thinks of women going to the Citadel, I'll tell you up front. You'll have to ask her yourself. — KS

**ATG:** Welcome to Charleston, Angie. How did you turn up here at the Citadel?

**ALC:** I happened to come to the Citadel because of my upcoming book with USC Press about my great-great grandmother. I wanted to get to the grave of **Emily Wharton Sinkler** on Rock's Church Island in the middle of Lake Marion so I called **Richard Porcher**, a professor of Biology at the Citadel, and long-time family friend, to ask him if he could get me on the island. As I was speaking to Richard he told me that I needed to apply for the job of library director at the Citadel. I told him I had a good job in Tennessee and didn't need it. The next day **Bob White** (Head of the English Department and Chair of the Search Committee) sent me an application and before I knew it I had been interviewed, and the Citadel said come, and I accepted. My father was a Citadel graduate of the class of 1929. Both of his brothers were Citadel graduates too. My father was **Ben Scott Whaley** and he was counsel for the Citadel for years. So I have a good Citadel pedigree even though I'm a lady.

**ATG:** So tell us more about this book. What's the pub date? You have done a lot of public speaking about it already, haven't you?

**ALC:** It's going to be on Univ. of S.C. Press Summer/Fall list of 1996. So it's going to be ready for Christmas sales. The book is called *An Antebellum Lowcountry Household; Including the South Carolina Low Country Receipts and Remedies of Emily Wharton Sinkler* and is in two-parts — telling about life in Upper St. John's Parish from 1842 to 1875 as well as a full transcription of Emily Sinkler's cookbook. I have been working on the book for at least four years. It started as an effort to preserve a falling apart cookbook which I found in 1989 in my attic in Tennessee one snowy day. Besides recipes, it's filled with remedies for consumption, how to make soap, six ways to get rid of mosquitoes and five ways to get rid of bed bugs. At first I thought it was just a curiosity. The manuscript was falling apart and in my great-great grandmother's handwriting. In the front is written: "Emily Wharton Sinkler, Charleston, 1855." Emily Wharton Sinkler was a pioneer and a lady who came from Philadelphia at the age of 19 to marry my great-great grandfather Charles Sinkler who she had met when he was stationed in the Navy in Philadelphia. The whole thing really started as an effort to preserve it for my children and so that mother and I could cook out of it together. And then my husband Fred went to Germany for a semester to teach and he carried me along. I needed a research project so I started doing research on terms in the cookbook. I made an electronic copy of it by typing it all in laboriously on my computer because it could not be preserved by either scanning or microfilming. And when I came home, I discovered that there were about 75 letters of



hers which she wrote home to her family in Philadelphia from Charleston.

I've spoken two or three times about this book. I think it is as contemporary today as when it was written in 1842. It's about a fascinating woman and I think it is going to be of interest to women's studies people as well as many other different markets. I'm hopeful that it will sell and if it doesn't sell, it doesn't make a particle of difference because I've had the fun of writing it and getting it published and I would like to recommend to anyone who's got a publishing project — get at it. It really is a wonderful, fun thing to do.

**ATG:** Tell us about selling the book to USC Press and how you started it as a research project.

**ALC:** My grandmother **Anne Fishburne** had published *Belvedere: A Memory* in 1949 and it was published by the University of South Carolina Press. So one day sitting in my office at the University of Tennessee I called **Warren Schlesinger** who was then acquisitions editor at USC Press and told him about this

book I was working on. And he asked me what credentials I had. When I said I was a librarian, his response was that I needed more credentials than that, but he encouraged me to send it to him when it was finished. So I sent it down with high hopes, probably like every fledgling author, and he wrote me back a letter — "This looks great but we will go through our usual process which is to send it to two readers." And so the final manuscript — I thought final at that time and it was probably the twentieth version in what's now the forty-fifth rewrite — went to **Alexander Moore** who's the Director at the **South Carolina Historical Society** and who is a Calhoun specialist. And **John Martin Taylor** who is the owner of **Hoppin' John's Bookstore** here in Charleston and who is quite a noted cookbook writer of his own. They did a once over on the manuscript and it came back to me — "This has got possibilities but it is a long way from being what we can publish." And the manuscript was torn apart. I mean, you never saw so many comments.

I went back to the drawing board and started digging into the literature. I started reading the *Charleston Daily Courier* from 1842 to 1875. I read the *United States Gazette* which is the paper of Philadelphia from the same period. I tried to document people who were mentioned in the letters. I read about travel in the South at that period ... what railroads — I knew she'd gotten around by railroad and steamship and sailing ship — what were the ships? What did it cost to go by ship from Charleston to Philadelphia at the time? Well, it costs \$25, a round-trip ticket on the ship. How did she get from Charleston sixty miles inland to Belvedere Plantation? Well, I've discovered by looking at train schedules in the *Charleston Daily Courier* that from 1832 you could catch the train from the Charleston depot up to Branchville, South Carolina, and then I knew she went by horse and carriage twenty miles over bad roads into Belvedere. I went back and I read about slavery. I went into the wills in Charleston County Public Library. I found the wills of Charles Sinkler and his brother so that I knew something about what amount of land they owned, how many slaves they held. I just did the research that I probably should have known

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from the beginning I needed to do. So it went back to my readers and they said, this is great. Go for it! And I got a letter from the University of South Carolina Press saying we'd like to publish your book. Working with a university press was an eye opener for me. I had no idea of the care and concern that would go into accepting a manuscript for publication.

**ATG:** So tell us more about this fascinating woman — Emily Wharton Sinkler. I believe you were telling me earlier that she was a member of the Charleston Library Society, a private library in Charleston in the nineteenth century.

**ALC:** Oh yes. She was a member of the **Charleston Library Society** in 1842. Today it is on King Street with its lovely new addition, but it used to be on the corner of Broad and Church. In 1847 Emily describes her excitement at joining the Charleston Library Society: "We have succeeded in having a share in the Charleston Library which has slumbered in the family since it was founded, and I can get as many books out as I want. The librarian told Mr. Sinkler that he would find the Library a pleasant lounge in the morning which he was not particularly gratified to hear as you know he likes to sit in the corner with a book and neither speak to nor look at anyone." It's also interesting that they had an incredibly large library for the time over 600 volumes. Here is what she writes about it — "The encyclopedias are very useful. Hardly a day passes that we refer to them for something. You would be surprised to see how many valuable books we have — nearly 600. Some we had before and some are beautifully bound. We have nearly all the standard works." But most all of her books were sent to her from Philadelphia by her father, **Thomas Isaac Wharton**, a jurist. Her letters are full of pleas for the latest Dickens serialization, for example. He sent her huge boxes of newspapers and books. Among her letters there are all sorts of references to the intellectual works of the day. She read everything.

**ATG:** You've talked about her a lot ... we haven't talked about you very much. I'm interested in how you became a librarian?

**ALC:** I believe in chance in life and I'm a librarian purely by chance. I was a schoolteacher in 1965 in Columbia, South Carolina, and my husband **Fred LeClerc** had just run for United States Congress against Albert Watson, a Baptist minister. And he was beaten — he got 39 percent of the vote. Fred was offered a job as head of Legal Services in Atlanta. He called me that summer (I had stayed in Columbia.) and said: "I just walked through the library and they've got a poster up saying that the Federal government will pay you \$500 a month to go to library school here at Emory." This was in 1965. So a librarian was born.

And then at the end of my library school, I was taking a course from **Carlton Rochell**, who was then head of the Atlanta Public Library — he's now Dean of Libraries at New York University. I hadn't planned to work right out of library school because I had two small children, but he gave me a job starting a film department for the **Atlanta Public Library**. The next thing I knew, Fred left Emory to be a law professor at the **University of Tennessee Law School** in 1970. One day the phone rang, and **Dick Boss**, then Director of Libraries at the University of Tennessee, asked me to start an audio-visual services department there. Then in 1976 I was hired as the head of the Undergraduate Library at UT, a position I held for eight years. Our undergraduate library was one of the wonderful libraries of the world. It was torn down to build a brand new, research library at the University of Tennessee. When that new library went up I became the Assistant to the Dean of Libraries. **Paula Kaufman**. But in a nutshell — everything good that has happened to me in my life has happened to me by chance. I believe in serendipity. When something falls in your lap,

pursue it like crazy. Follow the dream. Go down the yellow brick road and see what's going to be on the other end of it.

**ATG:** So what are your plans for the Citadel Library?

**ALC:** The Citadel Library was built in 1960. It's called the Daniel Library. It was built the year that I graduated from high school, Ashley Hall. It was a gift of Charles and Hugh Daniel of Daniel Construction Company. It's built in the Citadel architectural style — Roman Gothic — and has beautiful murals of the history of the cadets during the Civil War, World War I, World War II. The Citadel is a small, liberal arts school. Many people who have listened to what's been going on with the Citadel and the suit don't realize that in a community with 2,000 students and a wonderful residential faculty, you have got the most perfect opportunity for a liberal arts education in the whole world. And the Citadel has got a great library that has been a long time part of a fine educational process.

They have not had a librarian although they've had acting librarians for several years so they needed leadership. My aim is to get the book budget back up. I'm a great believer in books — not just print books but electronic materials as well. We need resources. In order to have the confidence of the faculty, we need to have the books and periodicals and the reference materials that you know as being head of collection development at the College of Charleston are what scholars and students rely on. So my number one priority is to reestablish the acquisitions budget, to begin an approval plan so that books come to us in a much less tortuous manner than they are coming to us now.

My second priority is to form a Daniel Library Friends and I have General Poole (the Academic VP) and General Watts' (the President) support. I have acceptances from 19 Citadel alumni to be on the board,

*"I think a library without a rare book room has no heart."*

and we have scheduled our first Daniel Library Friends meeting on April 8. **Dr. Richard Marius** of Harvard who was head of the Center for Expository Writing in Harvard and a wonderful, marvelous man, is going to address the group. I'm hoping a friends' organization

will get behind the library and that any money that comes in from it will go to a collection endowment.

And it's been really wonderful to discover that I have got a faculty and staff of about 20 — seven faculty, the rest staff — that are really productive, hard-working, and who know more about how to run a library than I do. So I have great ambitions for the Citadel Library. There's more cooperation in Charleston than I've ever been exposed to in libraries and it means that we can leverage resources that we've got because of **CALC** (Charleston Area Library Consortium — consisting of the College of Charleston, the Citadel, Charleston Southern University, the Medical University of South Carolina, Trident Technical College and the Charleston County Library). A small operation like the Citadel can tag on to a big operation like the College of Charleston. And we can make resources available that otherwise would not be. I'm on a train. Where that train's going, I couldn't tell you. Somewhere good, I hope.

**ATG:** I'm sure you'll be successful. You're determined to be successful. That's a large part of success.

**ALC:** I'm a people person. I want to know as many of the faculty as I can. I want to see their syllabi, to see what they're assigning, so that the library can really be tied in. And I want to know the students. We're going to have a Director of Libraries-Student Advisory Committee. I want students telling me where we are successful and where we're not. It's our users who know what's good and what's bad about us.

**ATG:** Antje Mays (Head of Acquisitions at the Citadel) was talking the other day about the Citadel's distance learning program?

**ALC:** The Citadel has — a lot of people don't realize it — a huge graduate program. We have 2,900 graduate students this semester, all

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in evening classes and summer school classes. People get MA's in every subject that you can imagine. We have a shared graduate program with the College of Charleston in history and in English. We have the only MBA program in the city. We have degrees in counseling. And we're offering a lot of these courses out in Walterboro and Dorchester County, in Summerville and Moncks Corner. But we have not kept up in delivering library resources to these people. So it is one of my top priorities that whenever I can restructure a position to have a distance education librarian who would help in providing access to our catalogs and online resources to these people and places.

**ATG:** Tell us more about the Citadel Library. How many journal subscriptions do you have? How many volumes? How about your Rare Book Room?

**ALC:** We have 250,000 volumes in our collection and our periodical collection costs us \$180,000 a year. The rare book section is wonderful. It's mainly made up of Citadel publications and works by Citadel authors. One forte in our collection is military history. We have a fine Southern history collection. The rare book room was built by General Mark Clark after the style of a lovely Italian room. It has Italian paneling and it's really quite a beautiful room. I have always thought that every library should have a rare book room. I think a library without a rare book room has no heart.

**ATG:** What indexes do you have, what databases do you have online?

**ALC:** We have 17 databases networked at the Citadel which is somewhat of a misnomer because for example, we have all the Wilson indexes and that's counted as one. But we have *Psych Abstracts*, we have *ERIC*. We have 17 plus our own online catalog and we are so lucky at the Citadel because the entire campus is fiber optic networked. From dormitory rooms or faculty offices, you can get online to our catalog, you can get to the Internet, or you can get to all of our databases and citation indexes available over a server. The Citadel really has the opportunity to have access to information campus-wide. It's been a hope that buildings would not be so important, that we would not need to build new library buildings because people were going to be accessing material from their offices and I warrant that it's going to come through for the Citadel.

It's General Poole's (the Vice President for Academic Affairs) ambition that every single cadet have a computer in his room and have full access to everything that we've got in the library online. And when we go to fulltext journal subscriptions like *EBSCOhost* or like you all have done with *IAC*, they're going to have all of the journal articles right there. The reason they're going to end up coming to the library is for the expertise that we can provide as librarians in searching databases, in constructing searches or in creating bookmarks.

**ATG:** Do you think that they're going to give you the money to get *IAC* or *EBSCOhost*?

**ALC:** Well, if you figure that those subscription costs are based on the number of FTE, it is possible that ... I'm hearing figures of \$20,000 and up. I'm hoping that the state of South Carolina will get into purchasing, statewide, some of these fulltext periodicals. I feel like that is the way we're likely to go. I don't think we're going to have enough money in our acquisitions budget this year or next year to spend \$25,000 to subscribe to these services particularly when we already have a lot of those publications in paper. We've also got them on microfiche backfiles and the minute you subscribe to online journals, you've got the problem of the fact that every student who walks into

your library is going to want to print their article. They're not just going to print the citations, they're suddenly going to print the whole journal article. So we're going to be budgeting \$20,000 to subscribe and then we're going to have to have a \$10,000 printing budget so that every person who comes in our library can print the fulltext articles. People think that fulltext sounds great, it's the wave of the future, but librarians are going to have to figure out how we are going to afford it. And another one of the things that we see is that everybody wants the most current. We have this idea that the most current information is the best information, but if we do not preserve the written record of the past and preserve it for future generations it's going to be gone. The publishers are not going to preserve it.

**ATG:** So you were born in Charleston?

**ALC:** Yes. I was born here during the War in 1942, January 14th. I grew up here (58 Church) which was built in 1752. I went to Ashley Hall and dated Citadel cadets. Played tennis on the Citadel tennis courts and my father was the first president of the Historic Charleston Foundation. I believe that Charleston has a wonderful heritage. I suppose that's why I began Emily Sinkler's cookbook.

**ATG:** So how many children do you have?

**ALC:** I have three boys. Ted LeClerc is a lawyer in New Orleans. Ben LeClerc is a lawyer in Miami. Kershaw LeClerc is a sophomore at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He's our baby — not much of a baby at the age of 19, but very different from his two older brothers. He's a mountain climber. He rode his bicycle home from Colorado to 2806 Kingston Pike in Knoxville, Tennessee, even though I forbade him to do it. It took him two weeks and three days — across Kansas, Missouri. He's an adventurer. Every time I talk to him he's either up the side of some mountain or on a ski slope and he things the Wild West is the place to be.

**ATG:** Did you go to college in South Carolina?

**ALC:** I went to Sweetbriar, a single sex girl's school in Virginia for one year, and then my husband, Fred LeClerc, said that I could marry him and come down to Duke to the university or he was going to get out of my life. So I took the option of marrying him. Believe it or not, I went to the Citadel two summers to graduate from Duke in three years. I'm the class of '63 at Duke. And I have my master's in librarianship from Emory in 1967 and I have a JD — I'm a lawyer — one of too many in my own family — from the University of Tennessee, 1988.

**ATG:** Why did you go to law school?

**ALC:** Well, my dad was a lawyer, my husband is a lawyer, and I went because I really wanted to be a lawyer. I also went because the undergraduate library was being torn down at the University of Tennessee and I knew my job as the head of the undergraduate library would cease to exist. I had this enormous fear that I was going to be assigned to the reference desk. I was protecting my future. They let me go on the slow track. I went from 1982 until 1988 and it was some of the happiest times of my life. I never took a course that I didn't enjoy. It was intellectually challenging. It was so fun to be with a group of people learning at the level of intensity that law students give to learning. There's a joke in my family that they think they're going to wake up one morning and find that I've enrolled in medical school. But I am happiest when I'm a student. Today I'm learning languages. I'm taking Italian at the College of Charleston so I can talk with Italians when Fred and I travel over there. I love the educational process. I

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think teachers are motivators and it's much more fun to learn when you've got a great teacher or motivator than to learn on your own. After law school I clerked for a judge for three years part-time on weekends, for **Judge David Tolbert**, who was the main Surface Mining Law judge in Knoxville, Tennessee. I clerked for him from 1988 until 1990 and it was some of the most exciting times of my life, but I was working 55 hours a week and writing his opinions on weekends. So I decided I was too old to be a lawyer. The only area of the law that I keep up with is copyright.

**ATG:** *I would think that your law background would be a great asset.*

**ALC:** I think it doesn't hurt to be able to say that you have a doctors of jurisprudence. I think that law is a wonderful training of the mind. It certainly is a good credential to have. We are going from a period when we purchased items, books and periodicals, to a period when we are increasingly licensing information, and it certainly doesn't hurt to have an understanding of copyright law. I believe that copyright does the wonderful thing of preserving and giving back to the creators and protecting the creators of material. If we didn't have copyright law we wouldn't have the production, the publishing, that we have in this country. And librarians often lose site of that. Librarians are really interested in providing access to information. And there's a conflict

between providing free access, open access to information and rewarding the owners of copyrights. That's the basis of the conflict between the library world and the publishing world today, in my opinion.

**ATG:** *Parting question: what do you like to read?*

**ALC:** Well, at the moment I am rereading **Richard Marius' *Coming of Rain*** which is an absolutely wonderful novel. He sets his novels in East Tennessee. I love novels; they are a huge escape. I'm reading **Pat Conroy's *Beach Music***. I loved his ***Lords of Discipline***. We are so overwhelmed with library literature, keeping up with it, that it is ... where would we be if we did not turn to music, novels, poetry, and things of that kind to inspire us? There's a human side to all of us in the library world, one that we perhaps have not explored enough and so I'm delighted to be interviewed. 

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*That's all folks. But wasn't it fun. Plus Angie has a slide talk that's about 45 minutes long about life on an antebellum plantation. She says she would be happy to present it to interested groups. I think I will ask her to speak to one of my women's groups! — KS*

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### Philipp Interview from page 32


share ten overseas offices that **Blackwell Ltd.** has established. We will undergo a major international expansion to bring **Readmore** and **BNAm** into a more aggressive posture internationally. We are offering libraries an easy way to order books and journals. We let the customer make the choice as to preferred country of origin.

**ATG:** *So what kind of other changes will we see in the next few months? What's happening with personnel?*

**PP:** All the signs are to an expansion of our organization. We are negotiating to expand the office space in New York. I just closed a deal in Blackwood to purchase 7 acres of land to expand the distribution center. It's a growing business and we aren't standing still. In North America we have over 600 employees. I think all signs are toward growth.

**ATG:** *And what specific changes will we see?*

**PP:** **BHB** and **Readmore** will be very aggressive on getting into the world of electronic journals. **BORIS** (working title) is a significant investment in dealing with electronic journals, and is one component of a larger electronic media department being established in Oxford. This new department encompasses our existing online (CON-

NECT) and library interface (EDI) capabilities and our new **CD Complete** service. This new department will provide integrated one-stop shopping for customers' electronic information needs including technical and licensing advice and assistance, and a single point of access to all electronic journals. The **BORIS** team includes **Chris Beckett**, **Tina Feick**, **Heather Steele**, **Phil Cotes** (who you all know) and also some newer names including **Suzanne Wilson Higgins**, **Martin Marlow**, **Andrew Hutchings**, and **Rollo Turner**. Our plan is to pilot this in one place and then roll it across the whole **Blackwell** group. We are very excited about our agreement with **Primary Source Media** and **BookScope**. They shipped 2,600 CD-ROMs in January of 1996. We are in the process of developing the capability to provide the option of original cataloging to our currently existing CIP upgrade program. NTO is being designed to provide **BNAm** and **BHB** book customers with access to all databases and management systems via the World Wide Web. Its plan is to be rolled out in modules to customers throughout 1996 and 1997. At **MLA** and **SLA** this coming May **Blackwells** and **Readmore** will begin sharing conference exhibit space. These are not so much changes as new directions that we are heading in. 

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*Well, one thing's for sure. Fred is not standing still either! I figure we'll need a satellite to catch him!*

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day, I practice yoga, and I read whenever I can. My favorite books are biographies. I have always been curious (some say nosy) about what makes people tick.

**ATG:** *Do you want to tell us about any future plans for **Majors** as we close this up?*

**ST:** I would summarize life at **Majors** right now in one word —

transition. We have many irons in the fire, and we are always thinking of ways to take advantage of technology. We are working with **OCLC** right now to complete a **PromptCat** interface. We have been in conversations with **OCLC** about enhancing CIP records and **OCLC** is interested. We are also talking with librarians and bookstore managers all the time about where the information profession is headed. As I mentioned earlier, we are releasing our new CD product, **majors.doc<sup>sm</sup>**, early this spring. And our biggest project right now is a comprehensive rewrite of our whole system into a fourth generation language called **Natural** that will allow us tremendous flexibility in serving librarians and bookstores. It's a fun time with lots going on! 